



Trees of Life

The Tree of Life, an ancient and powerful symbol, is deeply embedded in the human psyche. With roots planted deep in Mother Earth and leaves joyously or fiercely dancing in the winds of Life, trees seem to stretch longingly upwards to meet

our life-giving Sun and Father Sky. If we imagine trees as mirrors of our own bodies, or even of our individual lives here on earth, they can offer insight into our struggles to integrate Matter and Spirit. We might then understand how to better tend and grow our own individual spiritual selves, so that we might all again be rooted and connected to the greater One. Perhaps, we each might more clearly see and express our individual deep Truths and freely offer these, in concert with the community of sentient beings occupying Planet Earth. Who knows? We might reclaim the intuitive powers that ancient peoples have long depended upon, and, integrating those with our own well-developed intellects, learn the secrets to heal, create, sustain, and celebrate Life itself.

The Trees of Life exhibit is dedicated to the practice of devotion to all Life. As indigenous peoples worldwide continue their traditions of nurturing and supporting Mother Earth, many other humans are starting to move away from our own self-important and mechanically-inclined intellects and self-centered emotional responses, to slowly and painfully become aware that it is we humans who are out of balance with Mother Earth. Our perceptions of chaos, and our increasing and overwhelming levels of fear, violence and judgments may very well be internally generated, as Masters of the Tao have taught for over 8,000 years.....a result of our own individual distorted perceptions, disconnection, and separation from the harmonious Whole, of which we are part.

The Tree of Life is a powerful symbol, with roots in soil and rock to hold us steady while straining upwards toward Light. Trees stand in silent witness, anchors of patience and trust, firm in their rootedness as they physically sustain our lives, giving us oxygen to breathe, transmuting the carbon dioxide we release, and holding the ground beneath us steady. But, is there something more? Do they wait for us to reconnect with the rest of the planet, to transcend our physical, emotional and mental perceptions and needs to become One, rooting our own selves into the one undivided root that connects all of Life? As we concentrate on the beauty, power and spirit of these tree images, may we absorb the lessons of Tree-ness and give thanks.

This exhibit is a result of the City of Seattle's Tree Ambassador program, a grassroots endeavor to increase awareness and stewardship of Emerald City's tree coverage. With most of the real estate in Seattle belonging to residents, the Tree Ambassador program is raising awareness and implementing change literally in each of our own backyards. Graduates of the Tree Ambassador program commit to doing a public project to help the program reach its goals, one of which is to increase our tree canopy from 23% to 30% by 2037. Clarena chose to do a series of three projects to mirror the three levels of life: Spirit, Mind, and Body. The Trees of Life (Spirit) is the first.

Please enjoy the work of the 14 artists in this Trees of Life exhibit. It is my hope that viewing these images will encourage a more intimate relationship between humans and the trees that surround their homes and neighborhoods, as well as, perhaps, invoke a stronger connection with the spiritual subtle energy that resides in all of us, so that we might heal by joining ourselves with Mother Earth.

Social Hall Reception: Friday, April 25, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Clarena M. Snyder, Curator